



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **NOTIFICATION OF NEXT-OF-KIN**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
GEORGIA MILTENBERGER
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

Subject to the availability of personnel, emergency messages of any legitimate type, as defined by the employee receiving the message, will be delivered promptly. Any message pertaining to a death, serious injury, or serious illness will be delivered, in person, by an officer.

II. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Notifying the next-of-kin in a case where there is a death, serious injury, and/or serious illness, can place the officer in a delicate and uncomfortable situation; therefore, the following procedures should be utilized whenever possible and practical:

- A. Notifications will be made in-person as promptly as possible.
- B. The presence of a minister, relative, neighbor or close friend should be obtained whenever possible prior to notification; however, if this cannot be accomplished prior to making notification, the officer should offer assistance to the next-of-kin by contacting one of the aforementioned persons.
- C. When the officer is prepared to make the notification; the officer should refrain from making the notification outside the residence, and should ask the next-of-kin to step inside the residence.

- D. The person receiving the notification should be advised of the means used in transmitting the notification to the department, i.e., teletype, or call from another law-enforcement agency.
- E. If an officer will be making a notification on behalf of another officer or agency, the officer should obtain all pertinent information in order to assist the relative to whom the message is to be relayed and to ensure that the information being delivered is accurate.
- F. Notification of next-of-kin will be coordinated with any investigators on the scene, as generally they will take care of this function.
- G. If an officer cannot locate the next-of-kin upon arrival at the residence, the officer should attempt to ascertain the next-of-kin's whereabouts from neighbors, co-workers (if known) etc.
- H. If the officer determines the next-of-kin to be in a location outside the County, the officer will ensure that the agency requesting notification can make other arrangements.
- I. Routine media inquiries should be referred to the Chief of Police.
- J. For media inquiries that are not routine, such as at the scene of an incident, the supervisor and/or the Chief of Police have the authority to make statements to the media in accordance with this directive and the Department's media policy.
- K. The media will not be given a victim's name until the next-of-kin is notified, whether the victim is deceased or not.

Members of the media seeking information prior to the next-of-kin notification will not be given the victim's name or address.

- L. After the next-of-kin has been notified, the media may be given the victim's name and street name, and a synopsis of how the death or serious injury occurred, unless the disclosure of this information would adversely affect an on-going investigation.

III. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. Field Reports

If an officer notifies the next of kin pursuant to an incident for which he/she is writing a report, the report will indicate the name, address, and phone numbers of the person who was notified.

B. Teletypes

If an officer makes a notification pursuant to a teletype, the officer will ensure that a reply teletype is sent back to the requesting agency with the result.